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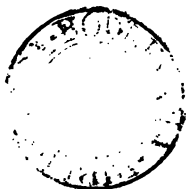
PROPHETIC OUTLINES:

*THE FOUR KINGDOMS, AS FORESHADOWED
TO DANIEL AND SAINT JOHN, •*

BRIEFLY CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THE PRESENT
STATE OF THE WORLD.

By JOHN REES-MOGG.

"Thy Word is Truth."—JOHN xvii. 17.



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PROPHETIC OUTLINES.

great outline, I have ventured to offer this work to the consideration of the general reader. He can fill up the sketch from his scriptural studies, or his further reading, as leisure may permit, or more serious inclination may prompt him; if one single individual shall, by its perusal, be induced to give some personal thought to a subject of importance far transcending all worldly considerations, I shall feel with thankfulness that this little labour of love will not have been undertaken in vain.

HIGH LITTLETON, *May 30, 1867.*

PROPHETIC OUTLINES.

I.

BABEL—INTRODUCTORY.

It is admitted on all hands that the present is a day of which history has never recorded the like. Events rush upon each other in perpetually accelerating ratio, and the most supine amongst us are becoming aware that the times in which we live are of no ordinary character. Every man explains these things in his own way. Few are so bold now as to attribute the events of the world to a mere blind chance, because such an assertion would be contrary to the spirit of an age which prides itself upon its intellectual attainments; and though I will not presume to affirm that man, in the conceit of his mental and physical acquirements, entirely ignores the superintending Providence which, in spite of himself, ordereth all his ways, it still cannot be denied that, with all the marvels of nature daily revealing themselves to us, with all the wondrous strides of experimental knowledge, which, in every department, alike social and scientific, we have made, we are very much in that state of mental error of which it may be said that "The world by wisdom knows not God." There is, however, amongst the serious, but quiet and

humble thinkers of the day, happily a large body of persons who, beholding with awe the events which are occurring constantly around us, do not fail to recognise in them the signs of those latter times so often referred to in the books of the Old and the New Testaments, and held up to our consideration in so strong a light by our Saviour himself. And these humble, and many of them unlearned, men search the Scriptures to see if these things are so; and, verily, therein they are truly noble. Some, also of the learned and the pious amongst us, have given their prayerful attention to this most interesting portion of the sacred writings, and have deduced from them a prophetic history of the world, even down to the present day, with an apparent accuracy of the most convincing nature; but they have drawn so largely upon sources of deep and critical learning that their works are almost sealed books to the inquiring multitude. But it may be possible, under the divine guidance which we most humbly entreat, to draw from the sacred treasury such an epitome of the prophetic history of the world as shall show to us, without going to deeper and more remote sources, with tolerable certainty our present position in the chart which it hath pleased God to lay down upon the broad stream of Time, and to enable us to ascertain with accuracy the present course of our track upon that great navigation.

We will be as brief as may be, consistently with a tolerably clear observation as we pass. We need not refer in this inquiry to the long line of prophecies, with regard to the Saviour, and man's redemption by Him. Satan's head has been bruised; it remains that he be trodden under foot, and finally destroyed.

Nor need we at present touch upon the chain of prophecies which relate to the dispersion of the Jews. Our present business is with the outer or the secular world. The canon of prophecy began more than four thousand years ago, when Noah pronounced the judgments of God upon Shem, and Ham, and Japheth. *Those judgments, to the present day, have been wonder-*

fully accomplished, and exist in their full truth and freshness. Cursed has been Ham (or Canaan, his son.) Africa was his original portion, and the African has ever been a servant of servants to the rest of mankind; and despite the abolition of the slave-trade, and the vaunted freedom of the negro, he is even now a servile and a degraded member of the human family. Blessed has been the Lord God of Shem. From the loins of Shem came Abraham, the friend of God, the father of many nations—the father of that scattered nation, which shall yet be restored to its great pre-eminence—the father of Him with regard to whom David saith: “The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” And though, alas, so many of Shem’s children have departed from the living God, and are immersed in the deepest idolatry, yet their possessions in Asia they have ever held. They are still nations strong and powerful; and though Japheth, in his enlargement, hath dwelt in their tents in India, yet it hath been more as a ruler and a guide than a conqueror or a destroyer. And hath not God enlarged Japheth; and hath he not overgrown the limits of his original European settlements, and colonized the American and the Australian continents, and the islands of the Pacific? and doth he not still dwell in the tents of Shem, and is not Canaan his servant? Such, briefly stated, is the present division of the families of the world. Such, well-nigh four thousand years ago, did the father of the patriarchs of that day pronounce should be the doom of his descendants. Hath the prophecy been falsified?

Noah, the great connecting-link between the ante and the post diluvian worlds, had been fruitful and multiplied, and his seed had replenished the earth, which was still of one language and of one speech.* Japheth had not yet enlarged himself disproportionately—Shem had reared no exclusive tents to himself—Ham was no servant to his brethren; they were still one in race and in language; and in their nomadic wanderings they

* Gen. xi. 1.

spread over the vast plain of Shinar. But the imaginations of their hearts, like those of their destroyed forefathers, were only evil continually; the recollections of the grand catastrophe were not forgotten. "Let us build, said they, a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto Heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."* And they did so—they did build them a city; and they did make them a name—and God looked upon their work, and it became, not a centre of unity, as they had intended, but as had been ordained in the wondrous counsels of Providence, a point of divergence for families, and nations, and tribes who could no longer understand each other's speech, but let and hindered one another in their work, so that they left off to build, and the name which they made for themselves translated unto every language under Heaven is Babel—"confusion." And thus, from thence were mankind scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, even as they now appear upon the school-room map, and the first great worldly prophecy received its fulfilment. But though the confusion of tongues at Babel had thus completed the dispersion of the families of the earth, and men had left off to build the tower whose top should reach to Heaven, yet the place where this great event occurred became the headquarters of a powerful people, and the Babylonian kingdom, one of the foremost amongst the early nations, from time to time waxed stronger and more strong; and we find her in the sixth century, before the Christian era, in the full zenith of her power, acknowledged mistress of the world, beneath the sway of the imperious Nebuchadnezzar. And here begins the prophetic history of the Gentile world, so far as it can be separated from the still greater stream of Jewish prophecy, in which point of view we wish for the present to consider it.

* Gen. xi. 4.

II.

THE FORGOTTEN DREAM.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, King of Babylon, was in truth a mighty potentate—he had despoiled Egypt*—he had carried the powerful nation of the Jews into captivity—he had carried away the treasures, and the vessels of the temple, and all the princes, and all the mighty men, and all the craftsmen and smiths;—and amongst the captives at Babylon was Daniel the prophet, then a youth, taken with others to the court to be instructed in the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.†

Nebuchadnezzar, in the second year of his reign, dreamed a dream—it was an awful dream, a sublime terror was mixed with it;‡ he woke; he was sensible that some terrific imagination had disturbed his slumbers; he endeavours to recall it to his mind, but his recollection fails him; he has a cloudy idea of some monstrous, gigantic, silent thing, that through a horror of great darkness glared upon him, but he cannot retain the lineaments upon his memory, nor will his utmost mental efforts bring back the vision to him; and his waking thoughts were troubled, and unrest possessed him. Who shall wonder that when the King met his counsellors in the morning, his countenance was changed, and his mind disturbed? Who shall wonder that in his perplexity he sent for the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to show him his dream? And they obeyed the imperial summons—a courtly race, ready to prophecy to him from his troublous vision smooth and pleasant things, and to receive their reward ac-

* 2 Kings xxiv. 7.

† See the Prophecy of Isaiah to Hezekiah, more than one hundred years prior to the event.—2 Kings xx. 17. 18; Isaiah xxxix. 7.

‡ Daniel ii.

cordingly. But who shall describe their feeling of blank amazement when the King informed them that the subject of the dream had passed from his recollection, leaving only upon his mind that sensation of distress which the undefined apprehension of an unknown coming ill cannot fail to produce, and that the first effort which he required of their skill was to restore the picture to his recollection? Servants of Satan though they were, he failed them now, for he was himself at fault; and they were forced to declare that there was "none other that could show it before the King except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." But prayer climbs to heaven itself, and penetrates the councils of eternity—and unto praying Daniel the secret was revealed in a night vision; and Daniel blessed the God of Heaven. And when the young prophet came before the King, how did he answer the royal inquiry, "Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?"

Truly he knew in whom he had trusted, and he spake, instructed by the King of kings; and thus he replied to the royal question:—"The secret which the King hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers show unto the King; but there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream and the visions of thy head upon thy bed are these; as for thee, O King, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed what should come to pass hereafter; and He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the King, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O King, sawest, and behold, a great image whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible; this image's head was of fine

gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass ; his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors ; and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them ; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream ; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the King.

“Thou, O King, art a King of kings, for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom, inferior to thee ; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron ; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things : and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided ; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men ; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch

as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the silver, and the gold ; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter ; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Before we enter more fully into the consideration of this marvellous dream, and its still more marvellous explanation, and its yet more marvellous fulfilment, let us, for a moment, endeavour to imagine the emotions of the king at this unfolding to him of his vision by the youthful seer. The dream had passed away from the royal recollection ; a mere undefined sensation of it remained upon his mind. The stripling before him had undertaken to do that which the chiefs of his magicians had declared to be the prerogative only of the gods. How lightly, then, must the king have esteemed the rash youth who volunteered his oracular explanation. Yet, when that stripling reminded him that ere upon his bed he had closed his eyes in slumber the preceding night, his last thoughts had rested, in the natural anxiety of a mighty monarch occupied with the public affairs of the greatest nation in the world, upon what should come to pass thereafter, his attention must have been at once excited. He remembered that the thought of the future of his kingdom was the last dim idea that had possessed him ere deep sleep overcame him, and the forgotten vision visited him. He remembered this as Daniel drew the picture before him, and his contempt of the young speaker was changed into curiosity. But as the prophet went on to describe the image terrible, the golden head, the silver breast and arms, the belly and thighs of brass, the legs and feet of iron and of clay ; each new scene brought back to his mind the perfect representation of his dream ; and when he had finished his description, the king became convinced that he who spoke to him spake only in the power of Him who revealeth secrets. But, as he proceeded, and unfolded the meaning of the vision, when in solemn accents he said to Nebuchadnezzar, "*Thou art this head of gold,*" what must have been the wondrous

thoughts that vibrated through every nerve of him who upon earth was acknowledged to be a King of kings. Well, in truth, might King Nebuchadnezzar fall upon his face and worship Daniel, for as yet he knew not Daniel's God.

And now, let us for a short time consider the dream and its interpretation. "Thou art this head of gold." One hundred years before this time the prophet Isaiah had apostrophised Babylon as the "Golden City."* She was the capital of the foremost nation upon earth, and he who now ruled her was the greatest of her monarchs. Well, therefore, might his serious reflections turn upon the continuance and the future of his vast empire; and it pleased Him, by whom kings reign, thus partially to unfold the future to him.

There were to be thenceforth four mighty powers upon the earth in succession to each other. Himself, the first, the brightest, the greatest—the then present point of time was that from which the future destinies of the world would take their date; each of the four powers, as it succeeded, would be inferior in some respect to its predecessor, until the mystic kingdom should arise which should stand for ever.

So far as the sacred record which we have quoted informs us, this is the whole of the revelation made to Nebuchadnezzar; a present magnificent, a future gradually becoming less great, less powerful, less united, until the extraordinary crisis which should destroy all traces of past governments, and set up one glorious and eternal kingdom. Enough for Nebuchadnezzar to know his own position was defined and ascertained; the future was shadowed forth with sufficient clearness to guide his judgment and his imperial policy, but not so as to gratify mere human curiosity or idle speculation. Nor probably was more light then vouchsafed to Daniel. And with this knowledge let us for the present leave them.

* Isaiah xiv. 4.

III.

THE FOUR GREAT BEASTS.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, the King, had passed away ; we shall have occasion to advert to his kingdom hereafter. Let us confine our attention, as closely as may be, to the great outline of the prophetic chart as indicated by the inspired writer.

Belshazzar now occupied the throne of Babylon, and Daniel, waxing old, was still an official in high honour at the imperial court. But Daniel, like Joseph of old, had been placed in that court as a servant of the most high God, and he had been a faithful servant, and great was his reward even upon earth.

In the first year of Belshazzar, it pleased God to reveal to that servant, a further portion of his Providence with regard to the future of the outward world ; and as we shall have occasion, from time to time, to advert to the subject in its connection with the forgotten dream, we must here transcribe the vision :—

Daniel spake, and said,* “I saw in my vision by night, and behold the four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts, came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings : I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised itself up on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it : and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl ; the beast had also four heads ; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong

* Daniel vii.

exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots; and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man, came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed.

"I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth; but the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the

others, exceeding dreadful—whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass, which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn, that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus, he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hands, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of his kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. Hitherto is the end of the matter."

Let us here consider the dream and the vision in their mutual relation:—Each was an outline map of the great governments of the world, until those governments should be taken out of the hands of man, at length become utterly incompetent to conduct them, and should be vested for ever in the Son of Man, who, coming from His Father's throne in the clouds of heaven, should take possession of his inheritance.

The picture of each vision was drawn from the point of time at which it was vouchsafed to the seer; and,

while we bear this in mind, we must remember that nearly half a century had elapsed between the periods of the two manifestations.

The visions were in every respect identical, though represented under different imagery. We need not stay to prove this by argument, for the sacred record informs us of the fact.

The *golden head*, the purest of precious metals, the seat of human intellect; and the *lion* monarch of the desert and the plain, strengthened by the *eagle's wings*, the sublime power of the king of birds, and guided by the *heart of man*, were all one; an emblematic representation of the Babylonian kingdom, the chief kingdom of the world, and than which, in worldly splendour, there should never be a greater.

The *silver breast and arms*, second to the golden head, were also like the sagacious *bear*, inferior to the compound perfection of the first glorious creature, and represented, whenever it should develop itself, the second kingdom. So also the *brazen belly and thighs*, and their corresponding, and equally inferior emblem, the *winged leopard*, a swift and cunning beast of prey, portrayed the third then unknown dynasty. And the fourth kingdom, with *legs strong as iron*, and *feet and toes* of like strength, yet compounded with uncongenial *clay*, like the *fourth beast*, which, though strong with *teeth of iron* and *nails of brass*, and *stamping feet*, is yet in its powers divided, receives, in like manner, its twofold symbol.

And yet, again, the image is at once and for ever destroyed, by the fall upon its feet of the *stone cut out without hands*. The pieces become like the chaff upon the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carries them away, and no place is found for them. The image is annihilated by the kingdom which the God of heaven shall set up, which shall never be destroyed. And in like manner the four beasts whose dominion shall from time to time pass successively away, shall yet have their lives prolonged for a season, until the fourth beast shall be slain, and with him their vital existence shall cease.

and the Son of Man shall take the everlasting dominion.

Such are the outlines which unerring wisdom drew of the history of the world, until the image shall be destroyed, and its very dust blown away by the winds; and the beasts, successively losing their dominion, shall finally cease even to exist, and all dominions shall serve and obey only the Most High. And these outlines will be verified even in the broad characteristics in which we are about to view them.

IV.

THE FIRST KINGDOM.

WE have already seen the Babylonian empire in its greatness: During the interval between the dream of Nebuchadnezzar and the vision of the four beasts by Daniel, history had made a step in advance. The mighty potentate, as we have seen, had passed away, and to adopt the words of a learned author,* whose writings have shed a blaze of light upon the records of those mythical times, "his last days were as brilliant as his first, and his sunset in an unclouded sky shorn of none of the rays that had given splendour to its noonday;" but though the golden head was still radiant, conspiracies, and revolts, and wars—all symptoms of great political danger—had more than once disturbed the public tranquility; and, therefore, we cannot wonder that when, in the days of his descendant Belshazzar, a few short years before the Babylonian Empire ceases to be the mistress of the world, the prophet's eye rests upon the emblem of her greatness, and beholding some of its pinion-feathers plucked from the wings of that otherwise most perfect creature, his mind became filled with fear, and whatever other causes might contribute

* *Rawlinson's "Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World,"*

to the effect, his cogitations much disturbed him, and his countenance changed in him.

In truth, the prophecy had begun to explain itself ; time had rolled on ; it was the third year of Belshazzar's reign, when another vision appeared unto Daniel*—but we must pass it for a moment, as its discussion here would break the continuity of our outline—it relates not to the golden head, or to the first beast (we will revert to it hereafter), but at a period subsequent to that on which we have just touched Belshazzar† the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. True, the Persian monarch was at war with him, and had not only invaded his territory, but was at the moment besieging the very capital in which he was holding his orgies ; but the walls of Babylon are, as he thinks, impregnable, the Euphrates which flows through her, is well-nigh one of her tutelary deities ; the golden city is safe. So Belshazzar feasted ; and while he tasted the wine, he became proud at heart, and boastful, and vainglorious ; and in the fullness of his drunken frenzy he commanded to bring forth the golden and the silver vessels which his father had taken from the temple, at the sack of the city of Jerusalem ; and for what purpose ? To praise therewith Jehovah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had praised, and extolled, and honoured, and of whom he had said from personal and fearful experience, "all his works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase?" Not so. They were brought forth, "that the King and his princes, his wives and his concubines might drink in them. And they did drink in them ; and they praised the gods of silver, and gold ; of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know ; and the God in whose hand their breath was, and whose are all their ways, they did not glorify. And in the same hour came forth the awful fingers, and traced upon the wall those mystic characters, solemn, fearful, and unintelligible, at which the King's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled

* Daniel viii.

† Daniel v.

him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. And again the astrologers, and the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers, and the wise men of Babylon were brought in, but they could not read the writing, much less show the interpretation thereof; and then Daniel, the now aged seer, was called before the King, and in words of stern and solemn inspiration proclaimed, that the supreme hour was come; and, reading that sentence of doom, announced that the monarch had been weighed in the balances and found wanting; and that his kingdom was divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. And in that night did the bed of the dried-up Euphrates afford to the besieging forces an open entrance to the undefended city; and that night was Belshazzar slain and Darius the Median took the kingdom. And thus passed away the power of the golden head, and the pre-eminent dominion of the first beast, and nought remained to it but the prolonging of its life for a season and a time. Thus ended the first kingdom—the brilliant “Babylonian Empire”—and thus far each vision had received the completion of its first stage; thus far prophecy had been converted into actual history. We will next continue our inquiry as to the second kingdom.

V.

THE SECOND KINGDOM.

BEFORE the fall of Belshazzar, and with him the destruction of the first kingdom, Daniel had, as has been already mentioned, another dream. We must now revert to it, and will transcribe the portions of it which relate to the present subject in the language of the prophet: *

“In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar

** Daniel viii.*

a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan,* in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.† Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns, and one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward, so that no beast might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand, but he did according to his will, and became great. And as I was considering, behold, an he-goat came from the west, on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes; and he came to the ram that had two horns which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns, and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him, and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he-goat waxed very great."

Let us now refer to the interpretation of this portion of the vision, it is given in the same chapter, at verse 15:—

"And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called and said, Gabriel make this man to understand the vision. So he came near where I stood, and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face; but he said unto me, 'Understand, O son of man, for at the time of the end shall be the vision.' Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground, but he touched me and set me upright; and he

* Susa.

† Eulceus.

said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be. The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia; and the rough goat is the King of Grecia."

It was necessary thus to divide this vision and its interpretation, that we might be able, step by step, to identify the various kingdoms, and their symbolic characteristics as they should arise. The first kingdom has passed from prophecy into history—from the foreshadowed future into the actual past—in marvellous accordance with the divine announcement. The sacred record has shown alike the prediction and its fulfilment—proof of itself that all the rest will be accomplished. It is scarcely an effort of faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, for in truth that generation had seen strange things in their day. And thus we arrive at the consideration of the second kingdom: it presents itself to us in a three-fold aspect.

First, as the *silver breast and arms*. Secondly, as the beast like to a *bear*. Thirdly, as the *ram with two horns*. The first and the third visions are alike in all their peculiarities, the inferior, though brilliant silver breast and arms, indicate a double sway; and as the time for the completion of the coming event arrived that double sway was shown more fully in the two horns upon the ram; and that ram, as the divine interpreter explained, was the Medo-Persian power; and it was a high joint power; and the Persian horn, though it came up last, was the higher, for it had conquered and associated with itself the Median, which was in truth the more ancient kingdom. And that this joint power was thus carrying out its destiny by extending its own influence in the world, behold it pushing westward, in which direction it at that moment threatened Babylonia; and northward, having incorporated Media, toward even the Caspian Sea; and southward, even unto India. Scripture does not, however, explain to us the meaning of the allegorical representation of this beast, raised on *one side with three ribs* in the mouth, and the direction

to devour much flesh ; but it has been, and apparently with truth, explained that, as rendered in the marginal reading, the Medes and Persians made one dominion or united kingdom, and subjugated three neighbouring powers—Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt—besides evincing excessive ardour to effect new conquests.* Twice, again, in the book of Daniel, is mention made of the kingdom of Persia ; indeed, it may perhaps be assumed that the last three chapters of the book are but the continued relation of one vision ; but, in chapter x., is an expression certainly hard to be understood, but which does not appear to have a prophetic bearing upon the future,† “The Prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me,” and a subsequent declaration, “I return to fight the Prince of Persia ; and when I am gone forth, lo, the Prince of Grecia shall come.” I therefore merely note this in passing, simply repeating that though the expression, indeed, I may say the whole of that chapter, appear deeply mysterious, yet they do not strike me as having a general prophetic bearing upon the subject now before us ; and when I come to the next chapter, xi., that impression is greatly confirmed ; because I there find the divine interpreter thus giving a succinct prophecy of the future of the second kingdom. “And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia ; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all : and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.”

I am anxious, so far as I can do so consistently with a clear exposition of the prophetic outline, to keep as closely, yet as briefly as possible, to the inspired history ;

* See Scott's Note on this passage.

† Scott explains this passage as a statement by the interpreting angel, that during the three weeks of Daniel's fasting and prayer, he had been employed in warding off mischief, which was arising against the Jews at the Persian court, and he returns thither for the same purpose, until that danger should be terminated by the overthrow of the Persian monarchy by the Grecian conqueror. It would scarcely have been needful to note the passage in relation to this outline, but for the marked reference to the succession of the Grecian kingdom.

but we must now have recourse to secular history in illustration of the sacred prophecy. In the days of the golden head, and of the first beast, the oracle was its own interpreter, and its own *historian*. There were no secular * records of that day, save those wondrous monuments which, interred for centuries, and decades of centuries, an allwise Providence hath at this time revealed to the researches of an inquiring and sceptical generation, almost as living witnesses of the inspiration of recorded truths, which were becoming rapidly consigned to the region of pre-historic ages. But, at the close of Daniel's long day of divine experiences, it had become no longer needful that Scripture should record its own fulfilment. The muse of history,† if we may venture to borrow a profane simile, had descended amongst mankind, and gentile writers had arisen, who truthfully recorded, according to their lights, the current events of the world; and, so soon as they get out of the dim domains of fable, we shall find them to be reliable authorities. And with this explanatory digression, we will complete our review of the second kingdom, the "Persian power:"—

The reign of Cyrus in Persia was approaching its termination. He lost his life ‡ in an engagement with the Scythian tribes; and Cambyses, his son, was the first of the Persian kings referred to in the prophecy. Cambyses died by a wound from his own sword, when about to return from his Egyptian campaign to Persia, where a Magian had, under the name of his brother Smerdis, seized the throne;§ and this usurper was the second king. But his reign was brief, a conspiracy of nobles put an end to his life; and Darius Hystaspes, one of their number, was made king. With him began

* I use the word *secular* in contradistinction to sacred history, which I hold to have been divinely written, and divinely preserved, at least, up to the time now under consideration.

† Herodotus appears to have been born not twenty years after the death of Daniel, and from his time secular history is tolerably perfect.

‡ B.C. 529—"Outlines of History," in Lardner's *Cab. Cyl.*
§ B.C. 522.

the war with Greece, which ended in the well-known discomfiture at Marathon; which his successor Xerxes, the fourth king, who was far richer than they all, resolved to retrieve, and by his strength, through his riches, he stirred up all against the realm of Grecia; and having assembled a multitude, drawn from all the provinces of his empire, he led them across the Hellespont, only to perish on the European territory; and himself returned almost a fugitive to his capital at Susa. But the Medo-Persian pre-eminent dominion had not quite expired. Xerxes, assassinated,* was succeeded by his son, Artaxerxes, and from his death, until the reign of Darius Codomanus, the Persian history presented the usual scenes of cruelty, treachery, fraud, and faction, characteristic of oriental despotism.

In the days of this Darius,† came Alexander, the Prince of Grecia, the he-goat from the west, and at the river Granicus he smote the ram, and brake his two horns, and cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him, and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

And thus the second kingdom, the "Persian dominion," passed away; and the Grecian power took the supremacy; but as we perceive, even to this day, a prolonging in life was given to it, soon now to be terminated.

VI.

THE THIRD KINGDOM—THE HE-GOAT.

WE must now take up again the second vision of Daniel, which we had interrupted. We left the ram cast down by the goat, and stamped upon by him, and utterly subdued by him.‡ "Therefore the he-goat waxed very great; and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones

* B.C. 467 to B.C. 424.

† B.C. 334.

‡ Dan. viii. 8.

toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised and prospered. Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

Let us now look unto the same chapter for the interpretation. Let us begin with the twenty-first verse, part of which we quoted in the last chapter. "And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many. He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand."

Thus far the vision and its interpretation, so far as it *relates* to the third beast. Before we further consider *it* we will refer to the eleventh chapter, verse 2, and

again quote a portion of that prophecy. "He [that is, the fourth king of Persia] shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."

We have thus before us the third series of the emblematic visions, and the divine hand which traces them still furnishes their explanation. The *brazen belly and thighs*—less precious than the silver breast and arms—are now the characteristics of the visionary image; the *leopard*, with its four wings of a fowl, indicative of its swiftness, and its four heads, representing its quadripartite division and its quadripartite power, yet its inferiority to the bear its predecessor; and the rough *he-goat*, whose great horn of power, when broken, gave place to four notable horns or illustrious powers, which extended towards the four winds of heaven, and the little horn or power which came forth of one of them and waxed exceeding great, were all correlative symbols of the Grecian power which should supersede in its pre-eminence the Persian authority.

To my mind, it seems clear that the kingdom now under consideration was destined to exercise a greater sway and influence in the world than either of its predecessors, though inferior alike in brilliancy and honourable position to either of them. The language of Scripture seems explicit upon this point. Of the brazen belly and thighs, or of the kingdom of brass, it is said that it shall "bear rule over *all* the earth;"* of the third beast, that "dominion was given to it;"† of the goat, that "he waxed very great."‡ And I rather think that, as we pursue the inquiry, all these conditions will be fulfilled. The third kingdom first comes before our sight in the person of Alexander the Great. This we

* Dan. xi. 32, 39.

† Dan. vii. 6.

‡ Dan. viii. 8.—The ram became only great, v. 4.

have just seen in the short notice of the battle of Granicus. Swift were the conquests of Alexander; rapid as the four-winged beast which was the representative of his power. But short was his personal dominion. After traversing in a career of triumph the eastern world, and lamenting that he had no more realms to conquer, he was cut off in the midst of his prosperity at an early age; and, after fierce and violent contests, his horn, or dominions, became divided into four kingdoms, all in their time notable, and those kingdoms were Egypt to the south, Syria to the east, Thrace northward, and Macedon to the west.* These all sustained a known authority, until by degrees they were successively overrun by the Roman legions. But they were not utterly extinguished—the horns were not all entirely broken—when out of one of them (probably the Syrian power) came forth the little horn, which waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land; and it can scarce admit of doubt that this little yet increasing power† was that which is now apparently hastening to its destruction—the Mohammedan delusion. Member of a princely family, though himself originally in a lowly position, Mohammed sprang up and became strong, alike as a spiritual and a temporal power,‡ and, strange to say, his Crescent waxed in the east, almost contemporaneously with the rise and progress of the Papal blasphemy in the west, and apparently the Cross§ and the Crescent are at this time rushing also contemporaneously to their common ruin.

Truly was the Mohammedan impostor of fierce countenance, for he taught with the sword, and dark were the sentences of his gospel, the Koran, and mighty was his power; but in his craft he never set it up as his own power, but as that of Allah, whose prophet he assumed himself to be; and wonderfully did he destroy, and

* Scott's Note on Daniel viii.

† Scott's Notes on Daniel viii., and the authorities which he cites.

‡ Hegira, A.D. 622.

§ I use this word in reference to its idolatrous application.

greatly did he prosper and practise, and fearful has been his oppression alike of Christian and of Jew, and against the Prince of princes has he stood up, and his mosque stands even in the holy city, and upon the site of the destroyed temple of Solomon. But, again, look at his waning crescent and exhausted strength, and consider if it be not his doom soon to be broken without hand.

In relation to the third kingdom, thus hastily considered, we have many other particulars of information granted to us, and they are more fully set forth in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, to which we have already had occasion to refer. But it does not appear to me that that chapter has any special reference to the fourth kingdom, though possibly, even to the present day, some portions of the divine will may, as to that kingdom, be on the eve of their accomplishment, in close connection with the completion of the destiny of the other beasts. I allude more particularly to the prophecy from the fifth verse to the end of the chapter; and I suspect that the whole of the rest of that chapter relates to that third power, and that the prophecy contained in it is running concurrently with those relating to the fourth or existing kingdom. It must be remembered that, though long since destroyed as dominions, there is a prolongation in life granted to the beasts; and it certainly does appear to me that the prolongation is thus illustrated, and that the last verses of the chapter relate to the last times of those kingdoms, synchronizing in perhaps a secondary manner with the last times of the fourth beast and the toes of the forgotten dream.

But this consideration would lead us into fields far wide of the point which I had in view. My object has been to draw an *outline*, and I trust that in that attempt I shall do it in such a way as to render it intelligible to the Scripture reader. The dominion of the third beast hath passed away, as a leading secular power.

We must now look with more serious eyes upon the fourth monster, whose birth was some time since, but his temporal power had just begun to culminate.

VII.

THE FOURTH KINGDOM.

It does not appear to me, as I have already intimated, that the prophecies of the Book of Daniel afford to us any further elucidation of the fourth kingdom, shadowed out by the *legs and feet* of the visionary image, and *the fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly*, than the explanations which we find in the second and seventh chapters of that prophecy. Daniel's latest visions were vouchsafed to him about five hundred and thirty years before the commencement of the Christian era. He was, it must be remembered, a Jew, and though high in honour at the Babylonian, and subsequently at the Persian courts, was, together with the heads of his nation, a captive in a strange land; his own people were the great subject of all his personal thoughts, and their restoration the object of his holiest aspirations;* and the interpretations of the mystic visions, so far as they related to the unknown future, were granted to him principally in relation to the Gentile world, and apparently that portion of it typified by the first three powers, so far as they were to have a bearing upon the destinies of the Jewish people down to the period of their dispersion. True, the last chapter of the book appears darkly to refer to the final consummation; but it seems to bear a double interpretation, to be understood very much in the way that our Saviour himself answered the inquiries of his disciples as to the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world; and, probably, for the same reason, that the prophet in the one case, and the disciples in the other, had but one idea present to their thoughts, the end of *all* things, which they evidently supposed to be identical with the close of the Jewish kingdom—an idea which, at the respective times of its

* Dan. ix.

enunciation, it was not needful to remove from the minds of the inquirers. We must, therefore, in our consideration upon the subject of this chapter, look beyond the recorded interpretation of the prophet to obtain the identification of this portion of the visions. And thus, if our reading be correct, the fourth kingdom is represented to him, first, as the *legs and feet* of the visionary image ; secondly, as *the fourth beast, exceeding dreadful*—no further view is granted to him of this kingdom. We must seek for a further description of the beast in the Book of Revelation, and we shall there find him appearing under exactly the same similitude, and with like characteristics as those under which he is presented to Daniel. Let us behold them as shown to the survivor of the personal disciples of Jesus, then an exile for his Master's testimony amongst the Roman convicts in the quarries of the Isle of Patmos. It was the Lord's-day. Perhaps even his task-masters had lightened the labour to their very aged prisoner ; perhaps he had converted many among his fellow-slaves, nay, possibly some of his warders might have learnt the gracious lesson taught to the gaoler at Philippi by a brother apostle who had entered into the joy of his Lord. Like Paul to Rome, John had been sent to Patmos, for some good purpose, on his Master's business ; and he was in its performance ; but lo ! he was in the spirit ; and this is one of the wondrous visions presented to his entranced sight. He says : * " I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon the horns ten crowns, and upon his head the names of Blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the month of a lion, and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed : and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast : and they worshipped the

* Rev. xiii.

beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to make war with him. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Now it is almost impossible to imagine a more perfect identification than this is; it will be well to examine it a little closer.

Each beast comes up from the sea.* The fourth beast of Daniel was diverse from all the beasts that were before. The beast of St. John was likewise diverse from them; but the very description which shows his diversity shows also his immediate participation in their peculiar natures, his combining in himself all their distinguishing ferine qualities. He is like unto the third beast, the leopard, his immediate predecessor; but his feet are as the feet of the bear, the second beast, and his mouth as the mouth of the first, the lion, thus uniting the chief peculiarities of the first three beasts of Daniel, and in that union showing his entire diversity from each of them. He has seven heads and ten horns; and even here the distinction seems to corroborate the symbol. The ten horns of Daniel's one-headed beast are reduced to seven, by the little horn before which three fell. The seven-headed beast of St. John bears ten horns, but they grow on seven heads: one of these heads has three. In the little horn of the fourth beast were eyes, like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things against

* Spoken of by Daniel as the Great Sea, by which the Mediterranean Sea was known to early navigators. This may possibly mark the chief locality of the prophetic drama. I draw no inference from the expression, but it is worth passing notice.

the Most High. These characteristics are simply transferred to the head itself; and while the season during which the saints of the Most High should be given into the hand of the little horn is, as we have already seen, limited to a time and times, and the dividing of time, a like power given to the beast seen by St. John is restricted to precisely the same period, though under a different computation of forty and two months.*

We shall soon have occasion, in other ways, to refer to the beast thus revealed to St. John, and that in connection with a more solemn and mysterious subject than has yet been before us. But I am desirous to complete the explanation of what I may call the *secular* picture presented to Nebuchadnezzar, and afterwards to Daniel. We have just seen that the beast, described in the early part of the thirteenth chapter of the Revelations, is the same as the fourth beast in Daniel's vision, and therefore the same as the legs and feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image; but the sketch is not quite finished. We yet look for "the stone cut out without hands," or, as the prophet interpreted it, the kingdom which God should set up, "which should never be destroyed;" the slaying of the beast, the destruction of his body, and the giving of it to the burning flame; the coming of the Son of Man, with the clouds of heaven, and the gift to him of dominion and glory, and a kingdom which shall not pass away. For this we must look into another portion of St. John's Revelation, and we shall find in chap. xix. ver. 11, the following: "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of Lords. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against

* I had wished to have avoided the consideration of these computations, but it is impossible. A short explanation of the principle on which the calculations rest will be found at the end of this work.

him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Is it possible to have a more perfect identification of Daniel's fourth beast? He comes to his end with an associate, with regard to whom we shall have to inquire by-and-by. But we have Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's vision perfected in the revelation to the disciple whom of old Jesus had loved. We have had before us the not obscure hieroglyphic of the fourth earthly kingdom—the last—for eternity succeeds. But this fourth beast, terrible exceedingly—this fourth kingdom of the world—derived its authority from a greater power; and John had beheld that power, and it appeared to him to have encroached into the heavenly places; for, says the apostle, "There appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads."* And after stating his persecution of the sun-clothed woman, and her sustentation in the wilderness for a thousand two hundred and threescore days, being the same duration as that indicated by the time, times, and half a time, and the forty and two months. The apostle is informed that the great dragon was cast out—that old serpent called the Devil and Satan—which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And it was this dragon which gave the fourth beast his power, and his seat, and great authority.† And thus have we in exact similitude that malignant being whom our Saviour called the Prince of the powers of the air, cast out into the earth, and his secular counterpart exercising all his supernatural power among mankind. We must next seek the locality and the name of this kingdom. St. John affords us an answer to the inquiry.

The dragon we have seen gave to the beast his

* Rev. xii. 3.

† Rev. xiii. 2.

power, and his seat, and great authority; and the dragon is described as a "great red dragon, having seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head;" and in a subsequent chapter,* as a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns, and in this guise, carrying the woman that sitteth upon many waters; and the angel thus explains to John this mystery: "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth. The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. . . . And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

Now, at the time when the words which I have quoted were written, there was one only great predominant power in the world, its foundations had been laid two hundred years and more before the fall of the Babylonian empire—the first kingdom; it had grown on during the dynasty of the Medes and Persians; it had superseded the Greek kingdom, and after wars and struggles, until then unexampled in the history of mankind, it had become the sole ruling nation. Wheresoever its legions carried their banners, and, therefore, their conquests, they also carried their laws and their privileges, and to be a participator in the civic right of that great power was no slight advantage; Paul, in a distant province, saved himself from scourging by the simple question, Whether it was lawful to scourge a subject of it? and that plea was sufficient to release him from his tormentors. No mean city in truth was she whose membership was sufficient to relieve a supposed offender from a painful indignity; and that city was then the leading city of the world. She was in the words already quoted, that great city which reigneth "over the kings of the earth." And that great city is personified by the woman, of whom we have already written. That woman-city sits upon many waters, and the interpreting angel saith "that the waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," and we thus

not only arrive at, but are driven to the conclusion, that the great city is the centre of that power which was then pre-eminent upon the earth. And yet, again, we have no occasion to change the picture, or to look at it from another point of view, we need scarcely alter our position, but for a moment we must refer to the original symbol. The woman is shown to be carried by the great red dragon, Satan. All the three prior kingdoms had indeed been Satan's kingdoms, for they knew not God; the Babylonian astrologer had revered him though he could not direct him in his oracular difficulties; the Persian, who imagined him in light and heat, had worshipped him in the sun and in fire; the Greek, over superstitious, had added to the attributes of nature another object of devotion, had exalted deceased man to a hero, and then deified the hero; and, lastly, in the fourth kingdom the statue of the deified hero had been exalted to the position of actual divinity, and thus, at the time at the contemplation of which we have arrived, Satan was truly all in all, and in every stock, and stone, and place he was worshipped under some ever new and varying name and title, and God himself was excluded from his own creation. And this was the condition of the world at the time when these visions were vouchsafed to John the beloved disciple, the last manifestation of the future to be granted by God to man. And now we have seen the woman,—the city;—the waters,—the nations—we have light sufficient, without being deeply read in authentic history, to ascertain the position of the nations upon the great chart, but he who never leaveth himself without witness, accumulates his evidence upon us, and he unfoldeth yet another page of the roll, by which we may ascertain the locality of the kingdom, and thence its name. "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth." The great city, which reigned over the kings of the earth in the days when John saw his wondrous Revelation, was built upon seven hills, and the name of that city was ROME.

VIII.

THE FOURTH KINGDOM—(*Continued.*)

WE have thus, by a slight anticipation, ascertained from Scripture the identification of the fourth kingdom, and its place, and its name, sufficiently to answer the requirement of that part of Daniel's vision which relates to it. The beast arising up out of the sea, and finally cast alive into the lake of fire, is evidently the same as the beast which to Daniel had represented the fourth kingdom, and whose chief city was Rome. That kingdom had not yet come to its predicted end; it still existed in full proof of the truth of the original prophetic visions. It stood forth stronger and more strong in pre-eminence over the world; a mighty secular power, and, at the time when it was shown to the Apocalyptic seer, it was one and undivided—the empire of the Cæsars. And this fourth kingdom, after the lapse of eighteen hundred years, as then portrayed to St. John, and at a much earlier period, dimly revealed to Daniel, still exists. Its prophetic future, as sketched by the inspired writers, has been recorded in the pages of the historian. The Roman power, after its seven phases of diverse forms of government, became divided into the smaller dynasties of its crowned horns, in strict accordance with the prophetic visions. But it hath well-nigh run out the course of its marvellous destiny. And though its divisions yet retain some portion of the original iron strength, all concurring present tokens show that it has almost passed through its appointed period, and that it approaches closely the last hour of its decline.

It were impossible in such a sketch as this, to detail, however rapidly, the particulars symbolized in the respective visions in their comparison with the events which they foreshadowed. It would be to write alike the sacred and profane history of Europe; and this

cannot be done in outline. Suffice it to observe that they accord with wonderful precision, and it will well repay the labours of the Christian student to pursue, zealously, and prayerfully, an investigation upon which an especial blessing has been more than once pronounced.* But the great outlines of the chart of this department of prophecy can be clearly traced from the Scripture alone, read by the light of the present day.

We have seen that vast dominion, and a strange spiritual authority—the Mahommedan—was given to the third kingdom; we behold a like dominion, and a wonderfully extended spiritual authority, granted to the kingdom now under our consideration. Ten toes were those of the image of the forgotten dream. Ten horns were those of the fourth beast of Daniel, and of the sea-risen beast of John; and interpreters, of early and of recent days, have viewed those horns in the same light in which they have beheld those of the third kingdom, which we have before noticed. I will refer to Scott, in his “Notes on the Eighth Chapter of Daniel,” and his citation of the historical authorities on the division of the European nations on the gradual breaking up of the Roman empire, and he thus states them:—1, The Huns; 2, the Ostrogoths; 3, the Visigoths; 4, the Franks; 5, the Vandals; 6, the Sueves and Alans; 7, the Burgundians; 8, the Heruli and Rugii; 9, the Saxons; 10, the Longobards; and thus, from more than one source, he sets up the ten horns. But, by-and-by, as instanced in the third kingdom, arose a spiritual power, which thrust itself up among those ten kingdoms, and finally got possession of three of them; and as Scott, quoting Faber, well observes, that spiritual power, the Papal horn, from small beginnings, became a temporal dominion; and we find that the kingdom of “the Heruli, the kingdom of the Ostrogoths, and the kingdom of the Lombards, were successively eradicated before the little Papal horn, which at length became a temporal, no less than a spiritual power, at the expense of these *depressed primary states*.”

* Rev. i. 3; xxii. 7.

These divisions, like those of the third kingdom, have from time to time varied much, but it is worthy of consideration, how in these latter times, the struggles of the European nationalities seem falling back upon their tenfold division, and realising the actual number of the toes and horns, and heads of sacred prophecy. And thus he that runs may read; and though it may not be permitted to him to fathom minuter mysteries of Revelation, he can scarcely fail to perceive that these holy records afford no uncertain tokens by which he may recognise the present position of the fourth kingdom, and its component parts; and awful will he find that position to be. He will find, and he need only derive his intelligence from the public press, which keeps him daily acquainted with the secular affairs of the outward world, that the nations of so-called Christendom, like the toes of the image, partly strong and partly broken, are falling rapidly to pieces; for there is no power of coherence amongst them—that they are shaken to their centre by internal convulsions, alike political and commercial; and that, externally, they are humbled and decimated by wars and national jealousies. He will see the states of centuries expunged from the list of nations, or absorbed into other kingdoms—minor powers, like nations born in a day, suddenly emerging into the strength and grandeur of first-rate empires; and wars and rumours of wars rife in every direction around him. He will see, too, the statesman and the ruler of the day aghast at the irreconcilable confusion of public affairs, unable to stay, and weak to control, the torrents of events that are rushing onward in every direction; and he will be forced to say that man can no longer pretend to be sufficient for these things.

And at this moment this is the state, in verification of prophecy, of the fourth kingdom, and that kingdom is the last secular authority; and when it shall have passed away, it will have no worldly successor.

But with regard to this kingdom, many new particulars were revealed to St. John, which we must in outline consider. The first particular which demands our atten-

tion is the GIVER to the *beast* of his power, and his seat, and great authority; and here we must remember that these are characteristics imparted to him, long after his arising out of the sea,* as the fourth prophetic kingdom. That giver was the *great red dragon*—Satan, who had ever claimed to be the ruler of all the kingdoms of this world; he who had been cast out from heaven, and, until his going into final perdition, had taken refuge in that world which he had originally ruined, and of which he had made himself, by usurpation, *the god*. And he it is who imparted to his own worldly counterpart, risen from the sea, that diabolical power and great authority, which were so peculiarly to distinguish the fourth kingdom from its predecessors. And he still keeps up that usurpation, and the beast, well-nigh effete, still confesses him his greater. And well, in the roll of prophecy, hath Satan sustained his original character; fated to bruise man's heel, he hath for ever done so—but a dissembler from the beginning, he hath concealed from man the hostile character of his malignity. He hath already driven into the wilderness the sun-clothed woman, of whom we shall speak shortly—and he hath installed the unchaste woman, to whom also we must refer, in her place. The first he did in his wrath; the second he did also in his wrath, but guided by his subtlety and cunning. We have now to see how, during the last eighteen hundred years, he hath continued to wear out the saints of the Most High, until the time when he must himself submit to his long-appointed doom.

Shortly before the time when, as the red dragon, he was presented to the contemplation of St. John, all his demoniac energies had been aroused by the result of his personal conflict with him who was † “manifested that

* I apprehend that the arising of the four beasts of Daniel, and of the one beast of John, out of the sea, means that they arose out of the peoples of the world; and that the figure must be understood in the same sense as the expression, “many waters”—*i.e.*, *peoples*, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, whereon the woman sat.

† 1 John iii. 8.

he might destroy the works of the Devil," but before that final destruction should take place, a long period, long at least in human reckoning, would intervene, and, during that long period, Satan would fight his strongest fight, for it would be a fight for existence—a final struggle of the principle of evil against God the author of all good. Satan, as we have said, had retained, from the time of the dispersion at Babel until the Christian era, his usurped dominion over the world, and, in his wise providence, God had permitted it to be so. He had originally deceived mankind in Paradise with the promise of increased knowledge, and of thereby making them equal to gods. He had given them the knowledge of sin, and he had thereby reduced them to the level of demons. He had shut them out from the light of Jehovah, and had involved them in the deepest darkness of hell. True, God had never left himself without witness in his own chosen nation, and his miraculous dealings with them ; but, even among that chosen race, Satan had been a perpetual intruder, and the leprosy of sin raged amongst the children of Israel, though less rampantly than in the Gentile world. But the set time had now arrived, and though the Heir had come to his own, and his own had received him not, because the usurper was still in possession ; yet he had come in strength, and Satan knew that the kingdom from which he had been already expelled in heaven, would ere long be re-established upon earth, rescued from his inexorable tyranny ; and that he would himself be relegated to the place prepared for him and for his angels. Well, therefore, might the angels say : "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Short in the councils of eternity, but, alas, to man long and fearful.

And Satan hath not been untrue to his primeval character of liar and subtle dissembler ; what he could not resist he hath perverted. He hath added intensity to evil, and withdrawn from good the essence of its virtues, or corrupted it with a destructive intermixture of

bad. True, the world was lying in wickedness eighteen hundred years ago, but it was a wickedness which the apostle hath characterised as the lust of the "flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," the mere strength and violence of the common and worldly human passions, exemplified in the assassin, or the bandit, or the thief, or the sensualist; but the perilous times foretold by St. Paul had not become developed, when "men should be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, resisting the truth, of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, evil men and seducers, waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."* But have not these times long since arrived in terrible and significant importance? Where is the *morality* of the world, public or private, political, commercial, or personal? Seek your information from all that meets your eyes in the experience of your days' practical avocations, whatsoever they may be; or, again, in the records of the public press, Where is the *Christianity* of the day? Is it not corrupted to its core, by schisms, and theological hatreds, and ritual observances, and forms, and ceremonies, until scarcely a vestige of its life-giving power remains? Where is *science* with its truly brilliant results? It hath been perverted by Satan into a false witness, to deny the truth of the inspired historians. To dispute the divine inspiration of the sacred record of man's creation, and, consequently, to call in question, the whole mystery of man's fall, and man's redemption, and the high and yet humble and holy belief which the Christian now has of his restoration to his original grand position when first distinguished from the rest of his creation God himself breathed into the nostrils of him whom he had formed, after his own likeness, the breath of life. Still, made unwillingly a false

* 2 Tim. iii. 1.

witness in the mathematical section of human learning, to expose alleged improbabilities in the diluvian period; and then, by a process alike plausible and deceptive, to assume that these records, on which rests the foundation of our most holy faith, are *unhistorical*. And thus by an apparently natural, and easy process of *rational* inquiry, the professed Christianity of the world becomes explained away, and absolutely rejected, and many a man, lost in the mazes of the religious labyrinth which Satan has constructed around the temple of truth, comes short of it, and emerges from the confusion of his mental wanderings, a formalist, a rationalist, or an infidel. As our Saviour told us would be the case,* *iniquity* hath abounded, and the love of many hath waxed cold; and this was one series only of the preparatory tokens before the end should come.

These, and ten thousand others such as these, are the resources of which Satan avails himself to ward off his impending destruction; and, irrespective of the leading particulars which we shall yet have to notice, they are great elements of power; and those elements he has imparted to the beast for the increase of his authority, for he knows that the continuance of his own worldly counterpart is the measure of the duration of his personal usurpation upon earth. But the hour of destiny has struck, and, evil fiend as he is, he must go forth to final perdition, with all his malignity upon his head. His powers are upon the point of their expiry.

Hitherto we have considered the *beast* the fourth kingdom, so far as it was revealed to Daniel, in the same emblems in which he beheld the other three kingdoms, and as so continued in its representation to St. John. We have also seen the great red dragon, Satan, lord of all those kingdoms; although, as to the first three, he does not make his personal appearance in the visions, because, for their explanation to the prophet, that presence was unnecessary. To him the kingdoms were exhibited strictly in their material and

* Matt. xxiv. 12.

secular character, and there was no occasion for Satan's introduction on the prophetic scene ; but in the whole of the fourth kingdom we behold the *spiritual* as well as the temporal influence of the grand principle of evil in full activity upon that earth of which he had taken possession, and whence—by the power of that WORD, which, from one poor wretch, had sent forth a legion of his angels to destruction—he and all his usurping hosts are about to be driven into eternal perdition.

The world, as shown in vision to Nebuchadnezzar and to Daniel, has been thus briefly considered. The god of the world—alike rebel, and usurper, and deceiver—has also been recognised, and more particularly as giving his authority and inspiration to the fourth beast or kingdom, which, as we have seen, is now drawing to its close. And needful were all his diabolic energies to sustain alike the secular kingdom of the beast and his own spiritual supremacy, for the Almighty was rapidly developing his gracious purposes to the fallen children of Adam. The great sacrifice for sins for ever had been offered up, and the Church of the first-born had been founded. The Jew had rejected his Messiah, and a partial blindness had befallen him ; while the days of the Gentiles were undergoing their accomplishment.

And then, to the Gentile world came that *sun-clothed woman*, radiant, and bright, and pure in all her attributes, emblem of the Church of the risen Jesus, but recognised by Satan as the first symptom, in his realm of evil, of his own spiritual declension. And Satan inspires into the beast the spirit of persecution against the woman. And fiery was the flood of persecution which, through the greater part of the Roman empire, the professors of that holy faith experienced ; and, finally, unable to establish any accredited position amongst a people wholly given to idolatry, and repulsed and rejected by the influence of him who saw that her establishment would be but the destruction of his entire pantheon, the pure Church is forced to *abandon the public teaching of the Gospel truth*, and

to betake herself to the place prepared for her in the moral wilderness, where yet she teaches beyond the spiritual Jordan; and many a humble soul while *in* the world, yet not *of* the world, comes to increase her band of faithful ones, *chosen* by the Holy Spirit from every nation, and kingdom, and people, and tongue; and there she in spirit awaiteth the appointed time when they will be revealed, a radiant assembly and church of the first-born, when Satan's influence shall be restrained, and the beast destroyed.

We have heretofore referred to a portion of the seventeenth chapter of the Revelations, when, through the figure of the woman, we had occasion to identify in name and locality the fourth kingdom. We must refer again to that chapter, and endeavour, by divine direction, to complete the picture which it affords to us, and the interpretation which the angel then gave of it. Its contemplation will bring us down to the moment at which we are now writing. We have seen the great red dragon in his slightly altered character of the scarlet-coloured beast, and the woman whom he carries. Who is the dragon or beast we have already seen? * Who is the woman we have also seen? The dragon—Satan—is the god of this world; the woman is the emblem of the chief city of worldly power. The true Church we have seen driven by Satan into the wilderness, biding her time from God; and in God's own good time her deliverance will come. Satan's resistance is vain, but his subtlety, as of old, may in some degree subserve his purpose.

Let us refer to the further Apocalyptic vision in relation to this woman on the scarlet-coloured beast. The events evidently occur at a time considerably

* The dragon and the scarlet *beast* are evidently the same being, Satan—that old serpent, who is said, in Gen. chap. iii. 1, to be more subtle than any *beast* of the field. In imperial Rome, therefore, crowned, he is endeavouring to destroy the pure Church, which escapes into the wilderness. Afterwards he sets up there the impure woman as a rival but false Church, therefore uncrowned, and with names of blasphemy. The scarlet *beast* has no separate existence, and we hear no more of him.

subsequent to the departure of the pure Church into the wilderness; but she has left the germs of gospel truth behind, which are irrepressible in their growth. Satan, therefore, guides the shoots, and leads them in a wrong direction. He intertwines the young stem and tendrils of the vine with the old trunk and boughs of his own tree of idolatry, and he intrusts the care of the misdirected sapling to the priestess of his ancient groves of impurity—the so-called vestal; now the woman representing the luxury, and abomination, and impurities of the Roman city, and that woman, with her double charge of heathenism and Christianity, well watches, under the Satanic guidance and support, each vintage; and from the fruits she presses into her cup a mixture of abominations and filthiness, which she proffers to the thirsty soul as the cup of blessing, and the dragon exhibits her to the world as *the Church*. But it will be better to read the doings of the city and her fate, from the record of inspiration. “I will show unto thee,” says the angel, “the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was,

and is not ; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition : and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet ; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them : for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings : and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."* Satan hath thus set up the symbol of the chief city of the earth, not ostensibly as a rival, but as a *counterfeit impure Church* ; and at length she will exercise in that character both regal and ecclesiastical authority in the world. But this is not, at the time of the Apocalypse, developed fully ; therefore the seer has this portion of the vision in the wilderness ; and we have already seen that the woman is *Rome*.

Read by the light which has guided us on our previous inquiries, it is, I think, impossible to arrive at other than one conclusion upon this part of the subject. The woman—Rome—in her character of secular head of

* Rev. xviii. 1.

the world, under the great red dragon, is the same woman who now presents herself under the same guidance; still Rome, exercising among the nations that illicit authority which unchaste women too often obtain in states, and even in families. Under her diabolic guide she carries on her intrigues in the cabinets and councils of the courts of the worldly powers, and though, occasionally, the bright ray from the sun-clothed woman in the desert will prevade her benighted kingdom, still, like an imperious harlot, she obtrudes her presence into the retirement of regal councils, and taketh part in the private deliberations of kingdoms. But her temporal power begins to decay—the monarchs who were heretofore her faithful sons, or her protectors, withdraw from her their support, and others have become her open enemies; step by step her temporal power over the nations becomes contracted; step by step she loses new portions of the domains of her triple crown; yet her seat still remains; and though restricted in her temporal character, she still boasts herself upon her spiritual throne; and while rushing to her ruin, declares that she sits a queen. And all that we need here in illustration, is to refer to the address of the highest English official of the Papal see—Archbishop Manning—and his sermon on the consecration in Leeds of a new Roman Catholic church, within a few days before the time at which this sketch was written;* and amongst other things, what says he: “The stone, cut out of the mountain, which filled the whole earth, foreshadowed the universality of the sovereignty, and the perpetuity of the holy Catholic Church, which, from the sunrise to the sunset, expanded its circumference, and had its centre immovable in Rome.” He then proceeded to allude to the present position of the Pope. “The day after to-morrow, a convention formed over his sacred head, and without his knowledge, by two mighty powers, *left him without protection and without defence;*” and again “God had *thought proper to constitute the head of His Church, and the vicar of His Son, in a true and proper sovereignty.* He, therefore, had a twofold sovereignty—a

* See *Times*, Sept. 20, 1866.

sovereignty over the things spiritual, absolute, and exclusive, committed to him, as vicar of the incarnate word; and, in virtue of this spiritual sovereignty, he had been exempted from all powers under God. It was needful that he—*i.e.*, the Pope, as the head and law-giver of the Church on earth, should deal with the princes, the potentates, the emperors, and the kings, as in all things equal or superior. What was the future before them? It was more splendid, more luminous than the past."

There surely cannot be a more perfect commentary upon the scriptural explanation than that afforded by the above quotations which I have made. Beyond doubt the unchaste woman is but a symbol of the Papal power, and we need not say that the *Papacy* verges upon its extinction amongst worldly powers. And it should seem that the one day is rapidly approaching, "in which her plagues shall come, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire."* And this seems to be the immediate prelude to the arrival from heaven of him who was called faithful and true,† who shall rule the nations with a rod of iron; who is also evidently the man-child born of the sun-clothed woman, who had been before "caught up to God and to his throne."‡ And all this occurs immediately before the war between the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, and him that sat on the horse, just before called faithful and true; wherein the beast and the false prophet are taken, and cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone.

There is yet one further subject of consideration, in relation to the particulars of the fourth kingdom, which distinguish it from the three former powers. Perhaps it should have been noticed before, but I found some difficulty in doing so, until we had considered the two spiritual elements represented by the sun-clothed woman and the great whore. The subject to which I refer is that attendant being, the lamb-like beast, or false prophet, of well-nigh co-ordinate authority with the beast himself, and acting in all things as his colleague

* Rev. xviii. 8.

† Rev. xix. 11.

‡ Rev. xii. 5.

and coadjutor. We find him in the same chapter, the thirteenth of the Revelation. He arises not from the sea, as do the four beasts whom we have hitherto been tracing, but from the earth; and John thus describes him: "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did die. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads. And no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom, Let him that understandeth count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man;* and his number is six hundred three score and six."

* This verse applies to the sea-risen beast. This name and number have, by some of the earliest interpreters, been held to be the word *ἄνθρωπος*, or Latin man, being indicative of the name of the fourth kingdom, and the letters, when read as numerals, furnishing the exact number, thus—

Α	30
α	1
Ϟ	300
ς	5
ι	10
ν	50
ο	70
ς	200
<hr/>	
	666

We have been enabled, up to this point, to explain the whole of the prophetic hieroglyphics from the interpretation given to the seers themselves by the attendant angels; and though, with regard to the figure now under consideration, the language of Scripture may be less distinctly pronounced, yet we may derive sufficient material from the visions to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. We have contemplated the *dragon*—*Satan*—ever subtle and active, his malignant energies roused to their utmost strain, by the certainty of his own approaching fall. We have seen the secular *fourth kingdom*, still in its subdivided state, existing. We have also seen the *pure Church* forced to take refuge in the wilderness, and supplanted by the *impure Church* of the *Papacy*. But I think we must not suppose that the institution of the Papacy was the sole artifice which Satan employed to effect his evil purposes. Light had come into the world, and it was a light which Satan could not shut out from the darkest corner of the human intellect. The knowledge—which was formerly but a vague belief—that man was an immortal and a responsible being, destined to an eternity of happiness, could not become rooted in the mind without expanding the mental faculties in all directions, and in every grade and position of life. Man became not only a mere animated being, but a self-conscious agent, inspired with a new sense of his own rights, and powers, and responsibilities. And Satan beheld this new light, and well knew how great would be the expansion of men's minds under its influence; and, though he could not shut it out, he could cast the rays obliquely in upon the soul, and it would have a distorted vision of things around it. And thus, by an easy process, the purity of gospel truth became soon corrupted. Man, in his wisdom, began to add to or to take from the simple teaching of Christ crucified; and even Paul, in those early days, began with sorrow to perceive the danger which threatened the Colossian converts, when he warned them to beware lest any man should spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition

of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.* Christ, who had himself warned them in the days of his sojourn upon earth, in the words and the spirit of one of his own early prophets: "This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."† And the commandments of men were already beginning to supersede the doctrines of Christ; and Satan, ever watchful, had taken advantage of the opportunity thus afforded to him of polluting Christianity at its fountain-head; and thus, in its earliest days, and long before the establishment of the Papacy as a spiritual power or church, he had introduced into it the traditions of men, and the doctrines of men, and there sprung up a new element of power unknown to the three preceding kingdoms, but a power of enormous strength and influence. It was the power of mind over matter; and while it could at will utter the great sounding words of the dragon, it assumed the gentle characteristics of the real Lamb of God; and in the garb of priest and prophet it performed its wonders and miracles in closest confederacy with the beast. The beast, rising before St. John from the sands of the sea, might, without more, have sufficiently fulfilled the conditions of the first vision, and, indeed, did so; but it was necessary to show the rise and continuance of the spiritual element, as a worldly power, which should be co-existent with the beast proper, by a separate symbol; and this element it was which imparted to the fourth beast before Daniel much of that mysterious terribleness which he unwittingly attributes to it. And it is an earthly power; for it is represented as arising up out of the earth, and it is of necessity tainted with the demoniac evil which we have just noticed; and though we will not dare to say that there is *nothing* of good in it, yet the evil is so infinitely predominant, that destruction only can await it. And before the secular kingdom wondrous are its performances. It is in truth *the mental element*, only in the fourth kingdom

* Col. ii: 8.

† Mark vii: 6; Isa: xxix: 13.

developed, pervading alike the institutions of every department of life, now become utterly tainted and corrupt; and it may be recognised in every kingdom of so-called Christendom, in all its institutions; and it is in truth the embodiment of that which may be called *civil and ecclesiastical polity*. Subservient to, yet guiding and influencing, the principal beast, the newly-developed element now pervades every department of the fourth kingdom; and, as we have already seen, the fate of the two beasts will be identical. I have endeavoured thus very briefly to sketch an outline of the fourth kingdom, as shown to Daniel, and as supplemented in the visions of St. John. Let us remember, that it is the kingdom which now bears predominant sway in that portion of the world yet called Christendom; it is the kingdom under whose sway we are now living; a kingdom in its secular character, evidently in a state of decadence, in its spiritual state no less so; and, viewed in either light, far from the possibility of restoration by any effort of man to the paradisaical state of which the fall had deprived him. We need not to repeat the sketch already drawn. We cannot fail to see that the kingdom is in that position in which prophecy hath described that it would be in its latest period; and it can scarcely admit of argument to perceive that that state of decadence very much answers to the Scriptural description of the world in its *last days*, and those days are surely pictured in the *world's present state*.

IX.

THE END.

WE have now been permitted to consider the fourth kingdom—in its secular character, as it was presented to Daniel, though with a mystic terribleness which was not explained to him—and in both its secular and spiritual

character, as shown to St. John. If the result of our inquiries be correct, the broad stream of prophecy hath brought us down, as we have before said, to the present days. And what are the present days? Are they not those symbolized by the toes of the great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his forgotten dream, before the stone fell upon them? Has not the fourth beast reached that phase of his existence at which we must expect him to be slain and his body destroyed? And have not the indications of that crisis presented themselves to us plainly and intelligibly? We have seen the dragon—prince of the powers of the air—usurping God of the world, exercising his dominion without dispute, and by his influence pervading every human institution. We have seen all the kingdoms of Christendom arrived at a period of impending dissolution; and this dissolution has descended from kingdoms to families, and even to households. The old bond of coherence is utterly broken; there is nothing to keep the nations, or the tribes, or the families together. And amongst the tokens of that dissolution the first public one hath become fully developed. The Papacy rushes to destruction; and, as we have seen, this destruction immediately precedes the final break-up of the fourth kingdom. The impure woman being thus on the brink of her destruction, what follows in the prophetic history? There is forthwith rejoicing in heaven,* and the spiritual adornment of the bride, the pure church, for her husband takes place. On earth appears—not as at His first coming, in the lowly garb of sinful flesh which he then came to ransom and to save, but in the power and majesty of Deity, with whom in the beginning he was, and who he was, and is—He the faithful and true, the *Word* of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and he is now attended by legions like to those whom, in the day of his mortal abasement, he would not pray his Father to send to him, and for this reason, that he would not destroy the efficacy of the *sacrifice* which he was about to make, once for all,

* Rev. xix.

for mankind ; but now with his chosen army, militant and triumphant, he appears to smite the nations with the sharp sword that goeth out of his mouth, and to rule them with a rod of iron ; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And the beast, and his mysterious coadjutor, the false prophet, rouse up their forces, for it is a struggle for existence ; and the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered together to the war against the Heavenly Conqueror, who is come forth at length to reassert his own, and to inflict the long-postponed vengeance upon his enemies. And it is a fearful struggle ; it is alike a spiritual and a secular contest, and it will be as Daniel said of it, a time of trouble, "such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time ;" and as our Saviour added, "No, nor ever shall be." And well must it be for man that those days may be shortened. And the result we know ; the beast will be taken, and with him the false prophet, and they shall be both cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

The secular kingdom, in all its heads, shall be destroyed, and its false prophet, its civil and its religious institutions of every sort and kind, shall be utterly and entirely swept away. Man, destined to an immortality of glory, placed in an Eden where one temptation only attended him, yet yielded to the tempter ; left to himself, he became more and more the bond slave of that dread being ; and though he hath been bought back by the price of the mortal life of his own Creator, he has again lost his repurchased liberty ; and like him out of whom the unclean spirit had gone, he hath taken unto him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and his last state has become worse than the first. He hath shown his utter incompetence to the resistance of evil, and God, in mercy, terminates the sovereignty which he had delegated to him.

In touching upon the future, so far as it is unfolded in prophecy, we must be most careful that we be not

wise above that which is written, and therefore I am fearful of pronouncing what will be the phases in which this mighty war will present itself, and how much of it may be strictly spiritual, how much material and actual; but my impression is that the prophecy will be most fully carried out, alike in its spiritual and secular sense, and I arrive at my conclusion from the simple fact, that all fulfilled prophecy has hitherto had its literal accomplishment, and therefore I infer that such will be the case henceforth. And thus, in humble faith, and in the belief that that faith hath been rightly directed, I read, by the light of Scripture, the immediate future of the fourth kingdom.

The Papacy, impure counterfeit of that Church still in the wilderness, is going rapidly into perdition. Her temporal authority being first destroyed, as will shortly be the case, the spiritual sway will soon follow.

When she shall cease to hold a joint seat with the beast *secular*, her throne *spiritual* will soon slip from under her. The horns already have made her well-nigh desolate—soon they will burn her with fire.

Whether this burning of Rome with fire will be real or merely figurative, it is not for me to say; though, for the reasons which I have mentioned, my impression is, that it will be a real conflagration. Where are Sodom, Gomorrah, Babylon, Tyre, Nineveh, Jerusalem herself, and many other of the cities of the world? not only destroyed, but destroyed in accordance with the scriptural predictions regarding them. Rome gone, forthwith the fierce struggle arises: First a war of opinions, it has even now been waged in petty skirmishes amongst us, but it will culminate to a fearful extent. Satan will himself lead the hosts of that great armament, for he best knows the secrets of the human heart. Every hateful feeling that can possess man's breast will come in, with more and more of demoniac malignity to sap the faith, and the hope, and the charity, which, born of heaven, used to look up to *heaven*, and through heaven bind together friends *and relations*, and families, and societies, and na-

tions. These, Satan inspires, and the false prophet leads.

But, secondly, the secular battle rages against the Most High and his saints. The whole world in arms is at war; we have just witnessed a slight foretaste of that which is forthwith to come, it is but the sequel of the deadly war of opinions. We need not touch further on it; we have glimpsed it. Like the former, it is inspired by Satan, and it is led by the beast and the false prophet. But the beast and the false prophet are taken and cast alive into the lake of fire, burning with brimstone, or in Daniel's words: "The beast was slain and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame."* And thus, in war, and tumult, and anarchy, and confusion, and in a state more conceivable in the regions of doom, than in the precincts of paradise, the fourth kingdom rushes to its destiny.

And the three other kingdoms, whose pre-eminent dominion has long since been taken away, have no longer a prolongation of their lives, for the mystic stone has fallen, and breaks the entire image to pieces together, and they become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors.† And then will be inaugurated that kingdom of millennial blessedness, spoken of in the twentieth chapter of the Revelations, over which Christ himself shall be the immediate ruler, and Satan shall be bound a thousand years, and the first resurrection will take place, and blessed and holy will be he that hath part in it; and oh, may it be our blissful lot to be partakers of it. But we dare not attempt to raise the veil which still shuts off that brilliant future from the gaze of man; suffice it that we are assured that it will be a season of paradisiacal happiness, which it hath not even entered into the heart of man to conceive; and that all signs and tokens intimate to us that it is a season in our own immediate future, and that this kingdom for whose advent, in the words taught us by him who is the King thereof, we daily pray, may now come upon us at any moment.

* Daniel vii. 11.

† Daniel vii. 35.

But this is *not* the end : When the thousand years of Christ's reign shall have expired, Satan will be loosed for a little season, and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth—Gog and Magog ; to gather them together to battle ; but fire will come down from God out of heaven and devour them, and Satan himself will then be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet had been already cast a thousand years before, and where they shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever, and then is the final resurrection, and the judgment. And then the cause of all evil being himself not only restrained, but absolutely destroyed, his dread sequents, death and hell, shall be cast into the lake of fire ; and I know not that we can close this outline better, than by adopting the sublime language of the apostle Paul, who saith : “ Then cometh the *end*, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority, and power ; for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” The last enemy that shall be destroyed is *death*. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that “ put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

X.

NOTE.

It was not my intention in this broad sketch to have touched upon what may be called the prophetic arithmetic of the Books of Daniel and Revelations. As it was my object simply to offer to the unlettered reader of Scripture something like a general view of the course of that *portion of prophecy* which has come under our more *immediate consideration*, much like the traveller who,

without a compass, would be able to judge the time by looking at the position of the sun in the heavens, or the indications of the weather by the light and fleeting vapour, or the more heavy and threatening thunder-clouds above him. But there are two or three data mentioned by the prophet and the evangelist, which I could not withdraw from the reader's notice; and I here shortly mention what I understand by the expression denoting the duration of the periods referred to by both those writers. The *week*, when used to indicate prophetic duration of time, has been understood as meaning a week of, *or seven, years*;* and that this is correct is confirmed by the actual fulfilment of that interpretation of the seventy weeks or heptads, in relation to the Messiah. The *day*, in like manner, indicates a *year*. The *month*, consisting of *thirty days*, is read as a period of *thirty years*. The *time*, on the same principle, is *one year*, of three hundred and sixty days. And with these rules, we may interpret all the expressions of the measure of prophetic time in the Scriptures to which we have referred; and it will be found that the results are confirmatory of the principle. Take, first, the expression time, times, and the division (or half) of time, a measure common to Daniel and John. This expression, on the above rule, may be thus read—

Time, or one year of years	.	.	360 years.
Times, two of the same measure	.	.	720 „
Half (or the dividing of) a time	.	.	180 „

1260 years.

Take, again, the forty and two months mentioned in Rev. xi. 2.

Thus, 42 months of years \times 30 days of years = 1260 years.

And, again, see the twelfth chapter, and the sixth verse of the Revelations, where it is stated that the mother of the man-child fled into the wilderness to a place pre-

* Dan. ix. 24.

pared for her for one thousand two hundred and three-score days, or 1260 years.

These are mere examples of the application of the rules which I have suggested for the satisfactory interpretation of the measures of length of prophetic time ; but the inquirer may use them in regard to many other instances of those Scriptures. And I venture to believe that he will find them to be thus soluble most easily. Many more like cases occur, which I need not now further mention ; and I will leave them, as they may arise, to the consideration of the reader, who cannot fail to apply them correctly by these simple instances. I ought not, however, to close this short observation without remarking, that according to the calculations of the most eminent and learned writers upon the subject, all the great lines of prophetic chronology, appear to converge almost at the very time at which I am writing this ; showing that we have indeed, and truth, arrived at the very close of the existing order of things ; and that we have already entered upon *the last times*.

THE END.

